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REDISCOVERY OF THE LORICARIID CATFISH,
ACESTRIDIUM DISCUS HASEMAN, NEAR
MANAUS, BRAZIL

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More than fifty years ago John D. Haseman (1911, p. 319, pls. 50 and 51) described and figured a very small elongate loricariid catfish which he collected near Manaus, Brazil, as a new genus and species, *Acestridium discus*. He distinguished the genus from *Farlowella* principally on the basis of the expanded, disclike end of the snout and the presence of many series of delicate, spiny ridges (with intervening depressions) on all of the scutes. Haseman had 3 examples, the largest (holotype) was 72 mm. in total length. The types are now in the Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago. With the exception of a restatement by Miranda Ribeiro (1912) of Haseman's original description and the inclusion by Gosline (1945) of the species in his catalog of Central and South American catfishes, the species, so far as is known, has not been reported again.

During a recent visit, Dr. Jacques Gery presented the Stanford Collection with 2 examples of *A. discus* (fig. 1 a,b) collected on 23 October 1965, by E. Fittkau and himself in a small tributary of the Igarapé Castanha, which meets the right (southwestern) bank of the Rio Negro at a point two hours by boat upstream from Manaus. The specimens (SU 64202) measure 49 and 51 mm. in total length. A search of the Stanford Collection revealed 9 other specimens of the same species collected by Dr. Carl Ternetz in 1924

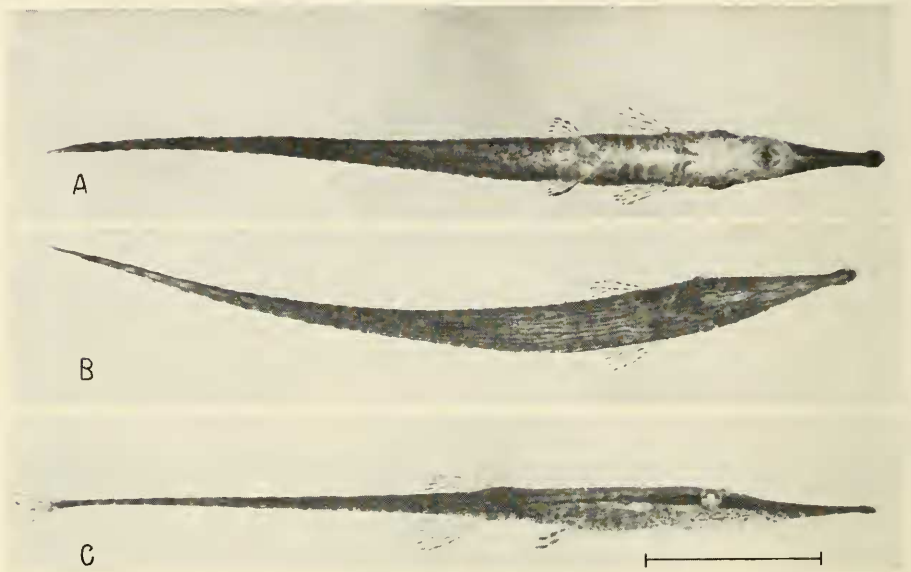


FIGURE 1. *Acestridium discus*, SU 64202, 49 and 51 mm total length; a, ventral; b, dorsal; c, lateral. Scale 1 cm.

from the Igarapé do Mai Joana, also near Manaus. These 9 specimens (SU 64095) range in total length from 48 to 65 mm. The total known range of the species then includes 3 tributaries of the Rio Negro near Manaus.

The specimens fit Haseman's description and illustrations with but one exception. The length of the snout, as usually measured from the anterior of the orbit to its tip, is about 2.25 rather than 4 times in the distance from its tip to the anus. Apparently Haseman measured the snout length differently, as this same measurement made on his drawings is about 2.25. Perhaps he, like Regan (1904, p. 303), used the distance between the tip of the snout and the anterior border of the naked area containing the mouth. This snout measurement, as determined from Haseman's drawings, does yield about 4 times in the distance from snout tip to anus.

Several characteristics in Haseman's description require discussion. The large retrose hooks on the dorsal and ventral surfaces of the expanded tip of the snout (fig. 2) are set in 4 rows of 3-4 hooks. One row lies on either side near the margin of the disc, the other parallel to it and situated a short distance from the margin. The first pelvic spine of many of the Loricariidae, including *Farlowella*, is covered with many small hooks. In *Acestridium*, the structure is comblike (fig. 3) with enlarged toothlike hooks in about 3 series confined to the median surface of the spine, the rest of the spine being naked. With the fins erected, the hooks point toward each other, and, with the at-



FIGURE 2. Pelvic fin. 38X.

tached fin membranes and supporting rays curving inward toward the midline, the whole structure appears like a small basket. This structure was common to all specimens of both sexes examined. Although sex was not easily determined because of the small size of the fish and, in some specimens, a lack of any recognizable feature of the gonads, the structure does not appear to be a secondary sexual character. Regan (1904, p. 198) describes the sexual characteristics in males of this family as being generally confined to enlarged bristles on the sides and top of the head or on the pectoral fins. But he makes no mention of the pelvic fins.

The body (fig. 1b) is finely striped with brown above, pale below (fig. 1a) with the black spots on the lower lateral sides (fig. 1c) forming a dark border in the abdominal region and continuing completely across on the snout and the caudal peduncle. A broad, brown, lateral stripe (fig. 1c) extends posteriorly on either side of the head from the snout through the eye and tapers to a point above the posterior edge of the pelvic base. Each of the rather bulging eyes bears a smooth-margined operculum on the dorsal part of the iris.

Acestridium discus differs from all known species of *Farlowella* not only in the sharply expanded snout-tip with its series of hooks and the definite spiny



FIGURE 3. Expanded dislike snout with rows of retrose hooks. 60X.

ridges of the scutes, which are fewer in number (25–27) than in any known species of *Farlowella* (33–34), but also in its generally smaller size; the rounded caudal fin; the absence of filamentous extensions on the main, terminal upper and lower caudal rays; the rounded (rather than acutely pointed) dorsal, anal, and pelvic fins; the straight vertical margins of the lateral scutes of the long caudal peduncle; five rather than six plates between the dorsal plate and the supraoccipital; and in having the ventral surface of the abdomen covered with two rather than three series of plates.

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